The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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FORGIVENESS.

The fairest action of our human life
  Is scorning to revenge an injury;
For who forgives without a further strife,
  His adversary's heart to him doth tie.
And 'tis a firmer conquest, truly said,
To win the heart than overthrow the head.

If we a worthy enemy do find,
  To yield to worth, it must be nobly done;
But, if of baser metal be his mind,
  In base revenge there is no honor won.
Who would a worthy courage overthrow,
And who would wrestle with a worthless foe?

We say our hearts are great, and cannot yield:
  Because they cannot yield, it proves them poor.
Great hearts are task'd beyond their power but seld:
  The weakest lion will the loudest roar.
Truth's school for certain doth this same allow,—
High-heartedness doth sometimes teach to bow.

A noble heart doth teach a virtuous scorn:
  To scorn to owe a duty overlong;
To scorn to be for benefits forborne;
  To scorn to lie, to scorn to do a wrong;
To scorn to bear an injury in mind;
To scorn a free-born heart slave-like to bind.

But if for wrongs we needs revenge must have,
  Then be our vengeance of the noblest kind:
Do we his body from our fury save,
  And let our hate prevail against his mind?
What can 'gainst him a greater vengeance be
Than make his foe more worthy far than he?

—*Lady Elizabeth Carew*, 1613.

THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS.

Stephen's triumph over force was the triumph of forgiving love. It is the very royalty of victory when love pours its rain of forgiveness upon the place where cruelty and wrong have stained our lives, and washes out the stain. No nobler thing is known on earth than the soul which forgives and forgets an injury, or only remembers it to use it as a means of redeeming the injurer. For that is the magnificence of God's triumph over us. We refuse his love; we neglect his voice; we set aside his education. Unmoved, his love soars serene above our wrongs, and, if it punishes, as it often must, punishes with the unwavering tenderness that regenerates our hearts, burning up all our chaff, and gathering in the harvest of eternity our wheat into his garner.

That was the glory of the victory of Christ. He loved men, and they scorned him. He thought for men, and they misunderstood him. They saw his goodness, and they called it devilish. They saw him seeking and saving the lost, and they killed him for it. But nothing could harden or embitter his heart. It is true the early enthusiasm of his love in his first sermon at Nazareth passed away; but it mellowed into the tried and profound affection of the man of sorrows, who bore our infirmities, and carried our sicknesses and died for the truths in which the progress of mankind is contained. That was triumph. For what was

cruelty or wrong to one who transmuted them within himself into reasons for deeper love? They lost their force and perished, slain by victorious tenderness.

If any of you have suffered wrong, what is it to conquer the trouble of your life? Is it to grow hard and bitter, and to end life with a sneer at those who can be taken in by mankind? That is a poor triumph. For you cease to hear in such a life the softening sound of the still, sad music of humanity; you lose, in scorn, the deep, abiding interest of having in your heart, not the image of your own angry self, but the image of the passionate drama of the race in which you are lost and found again; you lose the sympathy which, in knitting you to the sorrow and love and joy and activity of other men, makes you forget your own personal wrong, and, in leading you to give yourself away, blesses you in giving. Yes, noble is his conquest and divine his triumph who extracts love from the thorns of life, and the power of consolation from pain, who turns injury into strength by forgiving it, and weaves out of hatred a web of charity. It is this which, wherever it has been, subdues the world.

So Stephen died, his last breath a prayer for those who pitilessly slew him. To that the world pays involuntary homage. It stands by, and says: "Ah, how great! Let me die the death of the righteous, let my last end be like his." Can we hope to equal that? We may, for we have the same Father and the same Master as the first martyr had. But we can only win the power in one way. We flatter ourselves that, if a great forgiveness were needed, we could give it. But this divine nobleness of heart is not gained at a leap, in a moment, nor by those who cherish pride, scorn, and resentment in their souls. It is the last product of a long faithfulness to love, in common life. He who cannot forgive a small injury, who cherishes anger for little things, who will not forgive a slight sarcasm in home or social life, will inevitably fail when a great forgiveness is demanded. He who would die with Stephen's prayer upon his lips must spread the spirit of Christ over the whole of daily life, and watch unto loving-kindness with all perseverance. For love is a habit; and we learn it letter by letter, slowly, till we are able to spell out the whole word. Yes, the lesson which leads us on to express in life and death the full poem of a divine forgiveness is learned in the every-day demands for charity which home and social life and business make upon our long-suffering.

This is a victory worth the effort it requires,—the highest victory of all; for it outlasts the victory of faith and hope. It is bound up with the life of God in Christ in our hearts. To rejoice not in condemning, but in absolving; to forget the deepest wrong that man can inflict on us; and, remembering only that the injurer is a child of God, to forgive him instantly,—*that* is the last triumph of the Christian man who would, in dying, see the vision of the Lord of Love, and say in profound peace of heart, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

"THOUGH I TAKE THE WINGS OF THE MORNING."

Sweet are His ways who rules above,
He gives from wrath a sheltering place;
But covert none is found from grace,
Man shall not hide himself from love.

What though I take to me the wide
Wings of the morning and forth fly,
Faster He goes, whose care on high
Shepherds the stars and doth them guide.

What though, the tents foregone, I roam
Till day wax dim lamenting me:
He wills that I shall sleep to see
The great gold stairs to His sweet home

What though the press I pass before,
And climb the branch, He lifts His face;
I am not secret from His grace,
Lost in the leafy sycamore.

What though denied with murmuring deep
I shame my Lord,—it shall not be;
For He will turn and look on me,
Then must I think thereon and weep.

The nether depth, the heights above,
Nor alleys pleached of Paradise,
Nor Herod's judgment-halls suffice:
Man shall not hide himself from love.

—*Holy Songs.*

SYMPATHY.

Welcome with joy each week the day that God has called his day.

To each day of the week God has given

its special mission, its share of pleasure and of pain, necessary to purify and fortify and prepare us for eternity.

But *Sunday* is a day of *Love*.

On Saturday we lay aside our garments faded and stained by toil; and on Sunday we array ourselves in garments not only fresher, but more choice and graceful.

Why not prepare the heart, even as we do the body?

During the week has not the heart been wearied with petty strife and discontent, interests marred, bitter words?

Then why not shake off all this, that only chills affection? On the Saturday let us forgive freely, press the hand warmly, embrace each other; and then, peace being restored within, we await the morrow's awakening.

Sunday is God's day of truce for all. That day, laying aside all revenge and ill-feeling, we must be filled with forbearance, indulgence, and amiability.

Oh, how good for us to feel *obliged* to be reconciled! and each Sunday renews the obligation.

Let us leave no time for coldness and indifference to grow upon us: . . . it only engenders hatred; and, that once established in the heart, oh, how hard is it to cast out again!

It is like a hideous cancer, whose ravages no remedies can stay.

It is as the venomous plant that the gardener can never entirely eradicate. Only by a miracle can hatred be destroyed. At once, then, let us place a barrier in our hearts against the approach of coolness or indifference; and each Saturday night the head of the family shall thus address us: "Children, to-night we forgive, to-night we forget, and to-morrow begin life afresh in love one toward another."—*Gold Dust.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE YOUNG MAN OF NAIN.

LUKE vii. 11-16.

A peculiar interest attaches to this story, not only from its touching character, but from several other circumstances.

Luke is the only one of the Evangelists who narrates it; and this has given cause to some negative critics to discredit the whole incident. This seems hardly a sufficient reason for casting away an anecdote so interesting and important. Neither, it should be noticed, is it the principle we go upon in regard to other biography.

The story follows directly after the account (in Luke) of the healing of the centurion's servant. We will follow it step by step, calling to our aid all we know of Jewish customs, and seeking what help we can from local coloring and incidental facts.

To begin with, where was Nain?

Nain was in Galilee, only about ten miles from Nazareth. The site is known at this day. It is one of the towns which has never been lost.* Even the name is the same (Nein). Edersheim says: "Various roads lead to and from Nain: that which stretches to the Lake of Galilee and up to Capernaum is quite distinctly marked. It is difficult to understand how most of those who have visited the spot could imagine the place where Christ met the funeral procession to have been the rock-hewn tombs to the *west* of Nain and toward Nazareth. For from Capernaum the Lord would not have come that way, but approach it from the north-east by Endor. Hence there can be little doubt that Canon Tristram correctly identifies the now unfenced burying-ground, about ten minutes' walk to the east of Nain, as that whither, on that spring afternoon, they were carrying the widow's son.

"It is all desolate now. A few houses of mud and stone scattered among heaps of stones and traces of walls is all that remains of what even these ruins show to have been once a city, with walls and gates."

Nevertheless, there are reasons why we can see that it formerly deserved its old name,—"the pleasant"; (this is the meaning of the word *Nain*). It stands on an elevation. Across the wide plain we look northward toward wooded Tabor, and in the far distance to snow-capped Hermon. On the west rise the hills beyond which Nazareth lies embosomed.

The old version tells us that Jesus left Capernaum the day after healing the centurion's servant, and went to Nain. The revised version says, "It came to pass soon afterward that he went to a city called Nain." A note tells us that many ancient

*Smith's Bible Dictionary, "Nain."

manuscripts read "*on the next day.*" Is there any improbability that this journey could be made in one day?

There is not. Capernaum and Nain were distant from each other only about twenty miles; and, by using the cool hours of early morning and allowing for a noon-day rest, the journey could be made in one day, even on foot.

We must notice here that the Jewish custom was that the burial should take place on the same day as the death. Stapfer says after eight hours; Edersheim, that funerals frequently took place in the evening. If Edersheim is right, it accords with the story that Jesus should have met the funeral procession at the hour when he would naturally arrive at the city.

Outside the gate Jesus and those with him encountered the funeral train. Is it in accordance with Jewish customs that the burial should take place without the city?

It is. "Kings and prophets alone were buried within towns"; (Smith's Bible Dictionary, "Burial").

Jesus spoke to the mother *before* he "came *nigh* and touched the bier." Is it likely that the mother would have been in the procession and in front of the bier?

It is. In *Galilee* women preceded the bier: in *Judea* they followed it. Here is a noticeable unconscious testimony to the accuracy of the narrative. "He came nigh and *touched* the bier, and the bearers stood still."

Had *Jesus* followed Jewish custom, he and his followers would have turned about and followed the funeral train. That he *touched* the bier amazed all the beholders. The bearers were of course obliged to touch it; but others avoided the unnecessary ceremonial defilement.

Jesus now spoke to the youth: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak.

This implies that the young man was not in a closed coffin, but laid upon an open bier or something of that sort. What was the custom of the Jews in this respect?

"Coffins were but seldom used, and, if used, were open"; (Smith's Bible Dictionary). Edersheim says a sort of basket of wickerwork was in use at this period.

It is interesting to contrast the words of Jesus to the mourning mother with the usual formula of address used at a Jewish funeral; "Weep with them, all ye who are bitter of heart!" Edersheim says that the words Jesus used are, literally translated, "Be not weeping!" Possibly he included the other mourners in this admonition.

We note in this little story:

1. A remarkable accuracy in regard to Jewish customs in all except what relates to the words and actions of Jesus himself.

2. In these words and deeds of Jesus, that quiet independence of Jewish customs which was so characteristic of him and so consistent with the other stories of his life.

Matthew does not seem to have been present on this occasion. Probably he remained at Capernaum. Luke, perhaps, went to Galilee to collect material for his Gospel some time during the two years that Paul was in prison. To him we owe the story of the visit of the shepherds at the birth of Jesus; and of Simeon and Anna in the temple; also the visit of Jesus at twelve years old to the temple. These were evidently told by Mary; and this other precious piece of history we should have lost, had it not been for Luke. Thus some good came from the apparently unmitigated evil of Paul's imprisonment.*

Let me call attention to one more point. There is no proof that there was a personal friendship between Jesus and the widow's son. But there is nothing to discredit this belief; and the coloring of the story seems in its favor. Nazareth is within twenty miles of Nain. No object is assigned for the journey of Jesus from Capernaum, which, though perfectly possible, was a fatiguing journey for one day. It seems natural to believe that Jesus had heard of the illness of his friend, and hastened to his succor. The words spoken to the mother are like the "Fear not" addressed to Jairus. It appears, too, as if he recognized the mother instantly. He does not indeed speak the name of the young man, or rather the narrative does not so report it; but the story came to Luke some years later, and by what means we know not, and the name may have been lost or suppressed from motives of caution. Without the other two stories—of those raised from the dead by Jesus—this would

*The conversations with Mary may have taken place in the house of John at Jerusalem; but the account of the raising of the widow's son seems to have come from another source.

have less meaning. Together they support each other in a remarkable way, and suggest that we have here not accounts of the *violation* of natural laws,—which are also divine laws,—but a partial *revelation* of a law not yet fully understood. L. F. C.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.*]

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GIVERS AND RECEIVERS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Hallett, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Hallett, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

Postage on magazines and all periodicals (weighing less than four pounds), 1 cent for four ounces; on bound books, 1 cent for two ounces. *Paper* books are now sent by mail at the same rate as magazines, *when issued periodically*.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Any one who desires "Stepping Heavenward" may address Mrs. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.

The Cambridge Branch, Cheerful Letter Exchange, offers the following books: "First Lessons in Greek," White; "Greek Moods and Tenses," "Greek Grammar," "Greek Reader," Goodwin; "Greek Testament"; "College Greek Course, in English"; "Preparatory Greek Course, in English"; "Greek Lessons," Leighton; "Latin Grammar," Harkness; "Livy," Chase; "Latin Lessons," Leighton; "Latin Course, No. 2," Allen and Greenough; "Vocabulary of Latin," Allen; Keetel's "Analytical French Grammar"; "Le Gentilhomme," Campagnard; "Histoire d'un Conscrit de 1813," Erckmann-Chatrian; "Introduction to French Language," De Vivas; "Abecedaire, Française-Anglaise," Zenda; "A, B, C de la Composition," Lamesse; "Class Book of French Composition," Blouet; "German Poetry"; Sheldon's "German Grammar"; Krauss's "German Grammar"; Woodbury's "German Reader"; Stockhardt's "Chemistry"; Barnes's "History of Greece"; "Handbook of Home Rule"; "Tablets," Alcott; Worcester's "Spelling Book"; Hillard's "Sixth Reader"; Hillard's "Fourth Reader"; "Franklin Third and Fourth Readers"; Munroe's "First and Second Readers"; "Standard Speaker," Sargent; "Elements of Physics," Gage; "Elements of English History" and "Elements of Modern History," Guy; Johnston's "Natural Philosophy"; Pardoe's "Episodes of French History"; Quackenbos's "Rhetoric"; "Franklin Written Arithmetic"; Walton's "Arithmetic"; "Lessons in Drawing and Painting"; Geikie's "Physical Geography"; Stewart's "Lessons in Elementary Physics"; "Plane Analytic Geometry"; "Astronomy," Gillet and Rolfe; "History of the United States," Scudder; "Science Primers, Chemistry and Physics"; "Book of Nature" (Plants); "Piano Method, Part I., New England Conservatory"; "Golden Robin" (singing book); "Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid," Piazzi Smith; "Parlor and Garden," Rand; "The Gentleman," Calvert; "Sartor Resartus," Carlyle; "Carolina Sports"; "Leaves Gath-

ered in the Daily Walks of Life"; "Charley Kingston's Aunt," Pen Olivier; "Story of an Honest Man," About; "Calderwood Secret," Virginia Johnson; "In the Golden Days," Edna Lyall; "The Pariah," F. Anstey; "Seed-grain" (2 vols.); Arnold's "Light of the World"; "Explorations in Siberia," Atkinson; "Lady of the Lake," Scott; "Mona's Choice," Alexander; "Strange Adventures of a House Boat," Black; "Nell's Mission"; "Agnes and Eliza"; "Evelyn Grey"; "Belle and Lilly"; "Desert Home," Mayne Reid; "Flowers for Children" (Part I.). Address Mrs. Charles W. Kettell, 3 Brewster Place, Cambridge, Mass.

The King's Chapel Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. S. Devlin, 687 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. Wentworth's "Grammar School Arithmetic"; Wentworth's "Plane Geometry"; Franklin's "Elementary Algebra"; Hamlin's "Elementary Algebra"; Moss's "First Greek Reader"; Goodwin's "Greek Reader"; Jones's "Exercises in Greek Prose"; "Anabasis"; Harkness's "Latin Grammar"; Allen and Greenough's "Latin Grammar"; Jones's "Exercises in Latin Composition"; Woodbury's "Method of Learning German"; Ollendorff's "Method of Learning German," with Key; The Joynes-Otto German Course, "Exercises in Writing German"; De Fiva's "Elementary French Reader"; De Fiva's "Classic French Reader"; Bôcher's "French Reader"; Noël et Chapsal's "Grammaire Française"; Chardenal's "Second French Course."

Miss Margaret D. Fette, 11 Walnut Street, Boston, Mass., offers the following books: "Uncle Tom's Cabin" (2 copies); "Mademoiselle Ixe," Falconer; "Intermediate Music Reader"; Emerson's "Essays"; "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea" and "A Tour of the World in Eighty Days," Jules Verne; "Slings and Arrows," Conway; "Miss Crespigny," Frances Hodgson Burnett; "Fitzboodle Papers," Thackeray; "Picciola, or the Prison Flower," Saintine; "The Man in Black," Stanley J. Weyman; "Ships that pass in the Night," Beatrice Harraden; "Five Minute Readings" (collected by Fobes).

Miss Lucy M. Goodwin, Allwood, Amherst County, Virginia, offers to any one who will pay postage "The Man with the Golden Fillet," Amélie Rives; "The Man who vanished" and "McLeod of Dare," William Black; and three numbers of *Munsey's Magazine.*

I offer the following books to any one paying the postage: four "Complete Arithmetics," Goff; three "Spellers," Holms; "Speller," Osgood; two "Second Readers," Holms; one "Third Reader," Holms; one "Third Reader," Appleton; one "Second Reader," Appleton; "Modern Second Reader"; one "Fourth Reader," McGuffey. A. M. Allen, Floy, Alabama.

Mrs. Emma Miner, P.O. Box 45, Lisbon, New Hampshire, writes: "I have a number of old school books on hand, and will gladly send them, but would like the postage paid, if possible: the "Franklin Elementary Arithmetic"; Eaton's "Intellectual Arithmetic"; Eaton's "Grammar School Arithmetic"; Greenleaf's "National Arithmetic"; the "Franklin Written Arithmetic"; Green's "English Grammar"; Swinton's "Language Primer"; "Elements of the English Language," Bernard Bigsby; Leavitt's "Fourth Book"; "Selections for Reading and Speaking"; "The Gradual Reader," David Tower (old); "Franklin Fifth Reader"; Peter Parley's "Common School History" (old); "The Second Book of History"; "Europe, Africa, and Asia," Peter Parley (old); "History of Nero," "History of Cleopatra," "History of Hannibal," "Marie Antoinette of France," "China and the English," Abbott (old); Patterson's "Speller and Analyzer"; Harrington's "Graded Spelling Book"; "How We Live; or, The Human Body and How to take care of It."

The Cheerful Letter Exchange Branch of the Philadelphia Spring Garden Church offer the following books. Address Miss Helen B. Goodwin, 2036 Gratz Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "Middlemarch," George Eliot; "Colossus," Upee Read; "Mr. Potter of Texas," Gunter; *North American Review*, 1888; *Table Talk;* "Women's Progress"; *Every Other Sunday*, 1888; beautifully illustrated German magazines; miscellaneous numbers of *Harper's, Scribner's, Century, Atlantic Monthly, Unitarian,* and *Christian Register.*

"Katharine Lauderdale," F. Marion Craw-

ford; "Broken Links," Mrs. Alexander; "The Egoist," George Meredith. Address Mrs. E. Wooldredge, West Newton, Mass., P.O. Box 271.

Mrs. C. Vezin, 12 Cedar Place, Yonkers, New York, offers a novel of J. G. Holland named "The Bay Path"; Cornell's "First Steps in Geography"; Greene's "English Grammar" (1872).

Mrs. J. E. Coolidge, 600 24th Street, Ogden, Utah, offers the *Watchman*, a Baptist paper, to any one who will pay postage.

Miss A. F. Anderson, P O. Box 145, Lowell, Mass., offers *Art Amateur*, 117 months, from 1879 to 1888; *Art Interchange*, 186 numbers, from 1880 to 1892. These are not complete sets, but some of each year.

Mrs. F. C. Dorn, Point Rock, Oneida County, New York, offers these books to any one paying postage: the *Homekeeper's Review* (a monthly); "The Corsair," George Sand; "Nettie Bride," Capt. Cleighmore; and "The Arab Wife."

The Pepperell Branch of Women's Alliance will send a set of "Altars" (Sunday-school service book) to any Sunday-school in need of such books. Fair condition. Address Mrs. W. F. Heald, Pepperell, Mass.

I have three years of *Cosmopolitan* that I would like to exchange with some of *The Cheerful Letter* readers for *Harper's*, *Century*, or any other first class magazine of late date. Mrs. D. Warner, Grove, Geauga County, Ohio.

(It is best to mention which years you offer.)

Some back numbers of *Success with Flowers*, the *Mayflower*, and the *New England Magazine* from September, 1889, to January, 1891, inclusive. Address Miss Susie A. Hastings, 12 Cabot Street, Winchester, Mass.

"A Ward in Chancery," Mrs. Alexander; "The Late Mrs. Null," Frank Stockton; "Mr. Barnes of New York"; "The Yellow Aster"; "Robert Elsmere." Address, Mrs. T. D. Sanborn, E. Thetford, Vermont.

Miss Alice A. Burt, Perkins Street, Jamaica Plain, offers to give and send *Harper's Magazine*, beginning with December, 1894, and continued through 1895; also *McClure's*, beginning with November, 1894, and through 1895.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass., offers a few more copies of "The Story of Ida" (not for children); also, "The Tour of the World in Eighty Days," "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," "Tom Brown's School-days," "The Heir of Redclyffe"; also (for ministers or Sunday-school teachers) "Life and Times of Jesus, as told by Thomas Didymus," James Freeman Clarke; "The Christian Doctrine of Prayer," "The Christian Doctrine of Forgiveness of Sin," by the same author.

REQUESTS.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama.

Mrs. Stowell, Mrs. Jayne, and Mrs. Miner, all need children's books. Mrs. Stowell also asks for books for a mining population (many are educated people). Mr. Graves asks for a Sunday-school and parish library, Mr. Rhoden for an industrial school for colored children.

(If any address is omitted that should be in this list of standing requests, we shall be glad to insert it in the next number.)

Books for the Anamosa Church Library, formerly sent to Rev. Charles Graves, may now be sent to Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa.

The Sidney Library is the Bibb Library, moved three miles to a somewhat better situation.

Mrs. J. E. Ballaine, care of "The Ledger," Tacoma, Washington, a new subscriber to *The Cheerful Letter*, would like "In His Name" and Drummond's Lectures.

Mrs. Fred Hall, Olympia, Washington, has five children, nineteen, twelve, ten, eight, and five years old. They are quite intelligent, but are living under very unfortunate circumstances, and are much to be pitied. *Babyland*, *Pansies*, and other reading would be greatly appreciated.

Mrs. E. H. Reams, Aspen Wall, Virginia, is a widow, not able to buy books, and asks for reading for herself and daughter.

Mrs. M. Rhodes Fleming, Colorado, would like the *Housewife* and *Youth's Companion* for the present year. She writes, "It is quite lonely and dull here in winter; and, when one is shut up with nothing to see or read, it makes it dull. I have four children, all under twelve years old, so you see I have plenty to do; but one gets tired of work, and wants something to amuse one's self for a change."

Mrs. Kate Devine, Olympia, Washington, is an invalid, and has five children. She would like Miss Alcott's books, "Ben Hur," Wood's "Natural History," and "Daily Help."

Mrs. Fred Young, care Erving Young, Olympia, Washington, has been an invalid for three years. Would like "Light out of Darkness" or any religious books.

Mrs. Alice Harrison, Olympia, Washington, is a poor woman, and has a sick husband and several children. *Dumb Animals*, *Christian Register*, or any other reading will be welcome.

Mrs. Martha J. Flood, West Buxton, Maine, asks for works by Mary J. Holmes.

Mrs. Alice Bell, Linden, Oklahoma, asks for religious reading.

Mrs. Mary C. Guernsey, Sugar Hill, New Hampshire, asks for "Eight Cousins," "Rose in Bloom," "A Little Country Girl," "What Katy did at School," "What Katy Did," and "Old-fashioned Girl" for her little granddaughter.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass., asks for two more offers of the *Unitarian* and *Christian Register* for 1895 as they come out, and will give addresses for these.

Rev. J. R. Reynolds, Oxford, North Carolina, writes: "Our school has recently been opened here in Oxford, which town is in the heart of what is known as the Black Belt of North Carolina. There is no public school property in the town, and we are laboring to give the people advantage of intellectual and industrial training. As to the kind of literature, all good reading matter or school books would be much appreciated. Many of the children have not and cannot get books in which to study, and we supply them the best we can. Whatever you may send us, kind friend, will be thankfully received."

Any one willing to send the *Century* for this year will please notify Mrs. Hallett.

A correspondent writes, asking for reading for a little girl, Annie Beal, Highlands, Macon County, North Carolina, saying that the child is worthy of more advantages than she is ever likely to have, and "it will give our generous friends of *Cheerful Letter* an unusual opportunity to do good."

I have three children. Johnny is thirteen, Willie eleven, James nine. Such books and papers as the sisters could spare would brighten many a dull hour with us this rainy season. I am a Catholic, but am free to read whatever I can get. Mrs. Mary Berrigan, Olympia, Washington.

Miss Lucy M. Goodwin, Allwood, Amherst County, Virginia, requests "Ben-Hur."

I shall be thankful for any reading matter. I have seven children,—a girl of twelve, Annie; Morten, ten; Ida, eight; Henri, six; Paulina, four; Theodore, two; baby Emma, three months. I am a Lutheran in my theology. Would like German reading for myself and English for my children. My children would be pleased with papers, magazines, *Dumb Animals*. My children have few books,—only just enough to attend the public school, which will close the 18th of March. Mrs. M. P. Detlefren, Olympia, Washington.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—Will you not make room for me to enter your circle? We are living on our homestead, trying to hold our claim in the woods. We are all hard workers. We have plenty to eat, but no clothes. I cannot send my children to school, although there is a school-house within forty rods of us. I have five children: Tom is twelve; Belle, ten; Mary, eight; Willie, six; Margery, four. School books

and good reading will always find a hearty welcome with us. Christmas was a sad reality. My youngest children do not understand why Santa Claus did not come when they were so patiently waiting his presents. Mrs. Marjory Muncaster, Sheldon, Mason County, Washington.

(*Dumb Animals* and *Every Other Sunday* are being sent her).

A kind friend has placed in my hands two copies of *The Cheerful Letter*, the contents of which have been a source of great pleasure to me. I am living for the present up among the mountains in a very quiet and secluded portion of Virginia, and am denied all social and religious privileges. I would feel extremely grateful to the kind readers of *The Cheerful Letter* if they would endeavor to brighten the lonely hours I spend. Any good reading matter, which would be pleasing to children from thirteen to six years of age, would be also very acceptable. Address Mrs. Mattie M. Puryear, Ben, Alleghany County, Virginia.

I am a teacher, both literary and Sunday-school. We also have in our community a reading circle and literary society, of which I am president. We are among the mountains of North-eastern Alabama. Our people, as a rule, are Christian people, but poor. Our school laws require the use of certain books, and some children are now out of school for want of books. I would like to exchange some of my books for others. I would be glad to receive First, Second, or Third Readers, Swinton; "New Elementary "Arithmetic," Ray; "Primary Speller," Hansell; Maury's "Elementary Geography." Also would like good reading for my Sunday-school class, which is composed of boys and girls from eight to twelve years old. Would be grateful for any bound volumes (good books) for our reading circle. I can use a number of the above-named books in my school. A. M. Allen, Floy, Alabama.

Mrs. H. Langley, Augustine Springs, Kansas, would be pleased to receive any good reading matter, as she is too poor to buy much.

Mrs. Phebe J. Ector, 619 Liberty Street, Winston, North Carolina, asks for "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," or any other good book. She is still shut-in and suffering.

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon, asks books for her library for an out-of-the-way Sabbath school. She sends two references, ministers living in the same town.

(We can print these requests, but we cannot engage that books will be sent in response. Comparatively few books have been sent to libraries.)

Will you ask for me, if some one could send me "The Life of Frances Ridley Havergal" or one of Mrs. Mary Lowe Dickinson's books?

I have many good magazines and papers, odd numbers mostly, in good condition, which I would gladly send to *any* one who could furnish postage. I would be glad to have the *Housewife* or the *Household* after it has been read, through 1895. All the papers and magazines sent to me are carefully read and circulated here, and then sent away. Mrs. James A. Tyner, 916 North Ninth Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

The *Popular Science Monthly* is frequently asked for, but we do not receive *offers* of the same magazine. If any one will send the current numbers for the present year, we will gladly furnish an address. Write (for this address) to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

The editor would be glad to receive a few copies of the following numbers of *The Cheerful Letter* now out of print,—January, 1893; February, 1893. Please send to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Miss Clara A. Sheldon, Albion, Wisconsin, asks that some one would send the *Open Window* to an invalid, unable to subscribe for it. The address is Miss Minnie A. Peck, Waupun, Wisconsin.

Mrs. Martha Giesy, Olympia, Washington, would like to receive "Mother Goose" for her little girl (or any picture-books) and for her son, "Robinson Crusoe" or any good reading.

Will the person who wrote from Williamson on Nov. 12, 1894, and signed the note "In His Name," please send full address to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.?

Mrs. J. B. Johnston, Dade City, Florida, asks for books on the lives and labors of missionaries as helps in her missionary

work. She says, "I could make valuable use of such books as 'David Livingstone's Labors and his Legacy'; 'Robert Morrison, the Pioneer of Chinese Missions'; 'The Sunrise Kingdom, or Life and Scenes in Japan'; or 'Woman's Work for Woman There'; 'John G. Paton, Missionary to the New Hebrides'; 'The Lives of the Judsons.'" (References sent.)

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

MAKING A HOME.

Petty cares beset me: a thousand annoyances fret me. Every day I have confusion and hurry and noise and turmoil,—I who covet peace above all the possessions of earth.

The children are quarrelsome, the father exacting, the mother is nervous; the hat is lost; the overshoe is missing; the button off; the newspaper torn; the pudding burned; there is toothache and headache and a myriad of other troubles to be comforted; and mistakes to be explained; cross words to be overlooked; heartaches to be smothered, until a woman's life seems to hold so much of anxiety and restlessness and worry that many of us question if the little gleams of sun we see recompense for all the shadows; if the rose is sweet enough to repay the sting of the thorns. One thought sustains me through the toil of an average day,—one beautiful, helpful thought. It is this: I am making a home!

When self must be put down for the good of others; when the love-lamp seems to burn so low; when, in spite of our best effort, everything seems to go at sixes and sevens,—we can still feel we are making a home.

And what is a home? It is a kingdom, a refuge, a heaven! Is this not worth striving for?

Is any service so menial we may not do it to make a home? When we must sew and mend, and bake and brew, and wash and clean, nurse and comfort, forgive and cheer, we are making a home.

A home around which, in after years, may shine a halo of blessed memories. A spot from whence may lead pathways to greatness and glory, to which may turn the eyes of grateful generations, and about which may cluster thankful thoughts of noble men and women.

Let us remember it every hour,—we are making a home! Let us not lower our lives into the commonplace as we do. The life of the home should never be commonplace, save in the sense of the beautiful in simple things.

We cannot surround life's daily acts with too much ideality.

O mothers, do not grow weary. But bear and labor and pray, for we are making a home. Every act of ours goes to its construction. Let us, then, be loving, patient, unselfish, gentle, generous, cheerful, kind. Is it not worth while when we are making a home? EDITH WILLIS LINN.

LETTER TO SHUT-INS.

Dear Shut-in Friends,— As I read your letters, my heart burns within me; for I, too, know suffering and sorrow. I would like to write a word to every one, but in every way it is impossible. So I ask you to come for an hour to my home in far-off Washington,—to the "continuous woods where rolls the Oregon." It is a land of rocks and hills and swift-running mountain streams, all shadowed originally by giant fir-trees two hundred, even three hundred feet in height, with a dense undergrowth; and the clearings still occupy but a small portion of the whole.

Now we are at the house. You will not see it till we are very near; for it is low and gray, and half-covered with vines, ivy and clematis and ampelopsis. At first there was not an inch of sawed lumber in it; for mills were distant, and roads unmade. All was split by hand, even the boards of the floor, and the sides shingled like the roof. Some additions since have made it comfortable, but it is still literally a lodge in the wilderness. Till very lately there was only one house in sight, now but two. A high ridge surrounds us on three sides, with but little opening on the south. We have a great deal of cloudy, rainy weather, and then the ever-present firs are almost black. The country is too sparsely settled for good roads. There are no libraries, lectures, or concerts, and few churches. You will say one must carry their sunshine with them;

but think not the land though lonely, is forsaken.

People are really "neighbors"; and there are none wealthy, and none really destitute. "Hard times" cannot prevent the earth bringing forth her fruits, and there is at least food.

Then Nature has always some beauty for the seeing eye, and to the ear that listens for her voice she is never silent. The fir-trees, so dark and sombre in the cloudy day, light up in the sunshine, and take on a different aspect. To be sure, it is only a mild and pensive brightness; but it reminds me of the smile of one who has known sorrow which has chastened, but not chilled the heart. Then there are flowers in their season, many of them white and frail as if they had paled in the shadow of rock and hill. And then there is a hill not far away from which we can see Mt. St. Helen, a glorious dome rising serene and pure from the dark surrounding ridges; and another hill a little farther away shows us Mt. Hood, another snow-white peak. These great snow-peaks standing in lonely majesty among their humbler kindred, landmarks for hundreds of miles, are the glory of the land,—fingers of God ever pointing upward. It is long since I could climb those hills; but I see dome and peak in fancy, and the memory is always inspiring.

If it were spring, we would go into my little garden, and I think there would be flowers for all,—gay tulips and narcissi of many kinds, and sweet-breathed hyacinths; but now we must find some entertainment within. Oh, what a solace it is to have good books, and how generously the dear friends of *The Cheerful Letter* respond to our requests! I have just finished that grand and beautiful book, "Ben-Hur." If there are any others who have not yet read it, I hope they may soon have that privilege. I had not cared much to see it, for all the other stories I have seen dealing with that time seem poor and thin beside the simple story of the Gospels; but this is *so* different. If I possessed the book, I should reread it at least once a year while I live.

Some one has asked why poetry is not oftener offered. For myself, I cannot enjoy long poems; but some short ones are an ever-new delight. Sometimes I am almost glad of the failure of memory that makes them ever new. Such are most of those in our dear *Cheerful Letter*, some of Whittier's with their calm trust. There is one of H. H.'s, "Acquainted with Grief." It is not given to every one to fully accept its spirit, but it seems to me it must console and uplift every child of sorrow. And here is a verse that found me in a dark hour: —

"The heavens are measureless; the dead are free;
With their brief day on earth their sorrows cease.
O Grave, *this* is thy victory.
O Death, this is thy peace."

The first four words are like a trumpet-blast. Perhaps this may help some other one as it did me.

Now good-by; and, if this new year cannot be "happy" to all, may it bring peace, which is better! F. E. B.

AN OFFER.

The King's Chapel Branch will send to those wishing it "The Man without a Country," by E. E. Hale. Please address Miss K. E. Phelps, 47 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

I take this opportunity to thank you most cordially for "The Life and Times of Jesus," by James Freeman Clarke. I have never read a book that held me so spell-bound, and I have reread it several times. I wish I were gifted in words that I might write you just how it has helped me. Jesus *was* so "far away." *Now* he is my brother; and I can feel to live every day as if he were coming, or I expected to meet him any time. The book leads me to believe Jesus really lived on earth. Before that, I believed, of course; but it was a vague, blind belief, tolerated only because it was taught me.

Miss Louisa Dresel, 328 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., offers two or three copies of "The Life and Times of Jesus," by James Freeman Clarke.

From the earnest eye looking for the path before it a radiance shines that shows the true way by night and morn.—*Martineau.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There is a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on the first Friday in every month at 25 Beacon Street at 10.30 A.M.

Will the young people who read *The Cheerful Letter*, and desire to correspond with some one, write to Miss Bertha Langmaid, our secretary, who will assign to them a correspondent. They are kindly requested not to address correspondence on general topics to the editor. Please remember, also, not to write to the editor requests for books: these should go to the Book Club secretary, Mrs. Hallett.

Will not some one write us some short articles for our Mothers' Council?

It will help the givers of books very much if receivers are willing to observe the request that they should mention the *name* of the book in acknowledging it. "*That book*" usually conveys no idea to them.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who, in the future, write to us for books, to send the name of some minister as a reference; when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

Want of space obliges us to decline offers of original verses.

If you receive requests for money, it is best not to respond, but to send the name of the person who asks to Miss Langmaid or Miss Clarke.

Notice the offer on page 135 of Dr. Hale's story, "The Man without a Country," now become a classic as much as "In His Name."

The secretary of the Book Club asks that those who send books to correspondents would be kind enough to inform her of what is sent and to whom. If the givers of books are willing to comply with this request, it will assist her materially, and save her much trouble. If, for instance, you see a request for reading in *The Cheerful Letter*, and begin a correspondence with the writer, and send her books or even boxes of books, Mrs. Hallett has no means of knowing this, unless you inform her; and the next writer may receive no answer. Yet she cannot tell which of the two to recommend. If Mrs. Smith receives fifty books in six months, and Mrs. Jones only two, Mrs. Hallett would rather recommend Mrs. Jones to those who offer books; but, unless givers will help us by sending a report, many of those who need books will remain unsupplied, especially those who are too scrupulous to repeat their request.

It is a pleasant way to keep Lent by reading a sermon each day from Martineau's "Endeavors after the Christian Life," and with it a daily extract from W. P. Tilden, "Leaflets for Lent." We must admit that this is more in the nature of a feast than a fast.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. Henry R. Hallett, 310 Harvard Street, Brookline, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Hallett; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Ellen R. Dewson, Quincy, Mass. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly, or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

Send also all notices of *changes of address* to Miss Langmaid. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.